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SUBJECT: SUDAN: 2006 Country Reports on Terrorism

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General Assessment

11. (SBU) Sudan remains a cooperative partner in the Global War on Terror (GWOT). The Sudanese government has been a strong ally in the war on terrorism, aggressively pursuing terrorist operations directly involving threats to U.S. interests and personnel in Sudan. Sudanese officials have indicated that they view their continued cooperation with the USG as important and recognize the benefits of U.S. financial, training, and security assistance. While the CT relationship is strong at the working level, at the political level a growing number of senior, hard-line Sudanese officials have begun expressing a sense of resentment and distrust over recent actions by the USG and questioning the benefits of their continued cooperation. Their assessment reflects expectations that Sudan's cooperation on CT warrants its removal from the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism. At this time, however, there is no indication that the Sudanese government will curtail its current level of CT cooperation despite bumps in the overall bilateral relationship. The Sudanese government continues to allow USG officers unrestricted access throughout the country and the Sudanese continue to respond positively to USG requests.

Safe Haven Assessment

12. (SBU) In recent months, Usama Bin Laden and other senior al-Qaida leaders have called for the expansion of al-Qaida's presence in Sudan in response to possible deployment of United Nations peacekeepers in Darfur. This has led to speculation that some individuals with varying degrees of association with al-Qaida have taken steps to establish an operational network in Darfur. While elements of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), HAMAS, and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) remain in Sudan, there are no indications that al-Qaida affiliated extremists are active in Darfur, and local sources often use the term "terrorist" to refer to Janjaweed or local fighters, particularly Arabs. Al-Qaida affiliated extremists, however, might be able to exploit the limited reach of Khartoum's security services, the vast size of the country, and the easy availability of black-market weapons in an attempt to expand their presence without Sudanese government knowledge.

Terrorist Groups/Organizations

13. (SBU) As noted above, the elements of a few terrorist groups remain in Sudan. However, with the exception of HAMAS-which the Sudanese government considers to be freedom fighters rather than terrorists-the Sudanese government does not appear to openly support

the presence of extremist elements in Sudan. The Sudanese government has taken steps to limit the activities of these organizations. As an example, Sudanese officials have welcomed HAMAS members as representatives of the Palestinian Authority (PA) but have limited their activities to fundraising. The Sudanese government has also worked hard to disrupt foreign fighters from using Sudan as a logistics base and transit point for Jihadists going to Iraq. However, significant gaps remain in the Sudanese government's knowledge of and ability to identify and capture these individuals. There is some evidence to suggest that individuals who were active participants in the Iraqi insurgency have returned to Sudan and are in a position to use their expertise to conduct attacks within Sudan or to pass on their knowledge.

¶4. (SBU) The LRA led by Joseph Kony, continues to be a major terrorist threat to Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Southern Sudan. Although the Government of Southern Sudan has worked to mediate peace between the LRA and neighboring countries and vowed to stamp out the LRA in Southern Sudan, little tangible progress is evident, and the LRA continues to commit atrocities against civilians in the south. Negotiations between the LRA and the Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) continue, with occasional interruptions, in Juba under the mediation of the Government of Southern Sudan.

Foreign Government Cooperation

¶5. (SBU) In 2006, the Sudanese government has come under increasing fire from countries like Canada, human rights groups, and the lawyers of those detained extra-legally by the Sudanese government. The result has been an erosion of the ability and willingness of the security services to hold terrorist suspects until sufficient evidence against them can be obtained as the Sudanese government seeks to clean-up its human rights record. While Sudanese officials regularly discuss counterterrorism issues with U.S. officials and senior Sudanese security officials have visited the U.S. for consultations, it remains to be seen how long the Sudanese government will continue to be an active partner in the GWOT given internal pressures and the deteriorating state of the bilateral relationship with the U.S.

¶6. (SBU) Embassy Khartoum Point of Contact is Pol/Econ Counselor Eric P. Whitaker. His e-mail address is whitakerep(at)state.gov and his telephone numbers are 249-183-774-700 (Embassy) and 249-912159576 (cellular phone).

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